

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

ACDA-10 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01

CU-04 OMB-01 EA-10 /105 W

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R 051841Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9089

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 11372

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLAB, FR

1. SUMMARY. TRADITIONAL 1 MAY PARADES PRODUCED NORMALLY CONTESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS (ESTIMATED 50,000 BY POLICE, 200,000 BY ORGANIZERS), WAVES OF PLACARDS WITH RHYMED SLOGANS AND A FEW INTERESTING CLUES TO THE CURRENT LABOR AND POLITICAL SCENE. END SUMMARY.

2. TWO PARADES WERE ORGANIZED, ONE IN THE MORNING BY EXTREME LEFT GROUPS "LUTTE OUVRIERE" AND "REVOLUTION" AND ANOTHER IN THE AFTERNOON BY CGT-CFDT. FO STUCK TO ITS TRADITION OF REFUSING TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY CGT-CFDT DEMONSTRATIONS AND SENT INSTEAD A DELEGATION TO LAY A WREATH TO THE LEON JUHEAUX TOMB. INTERESTINGLY THE LIGUE COMMUNISTE INTERNATIONALE (TROTSKYITE GROUP HEADED BY KRIVINE) BROKE RANKS WITH OTHER GAUCHISTS AND ALTHOUGH UNINVITED PARTICIPATED IN CGT-CFDT SHOW. THEY WERE KEPT AT END OF PARADE AND UNDER CLOSE SURVEILLANCE

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BY CGT ORDER FORCES.

3. FEAR OF UNEMPLOYMENT ACCENTUATED BY SEVERAL OFFICIAL STATEMENTS IN RECENT DAYS PREDICTING ONE MILLION UNEMPLOYED BEFORE SITUATION GETS BETTER, DEPRIVED PARADE OF REVOLUTIONARY FERVOR. TRADE UNION SLOGANS REPEATED OLD DEMANDS OF RETIREMENT AT 60 WITH 75 PERCENT OF SALARY AND REDUCTION OF WORK WEEK WITHOUT LOSS OF PAY.

4. FALL OF SAIGON STIMULATED AN UNUSUAL INTEREST IN INTERNATIONAL EVENTS AND PROVIDED A VARIETY OF SLOGANS AND CHANTS. WHILE MOST OF PLACARDS HAILED "DEFEAT OF IMPERIALISM", FEW EXPRESSED STRIDENT ANTI-U.S. SENTIMENT.

5. FOR THE FIRST TIME MAIRE OF CFDT AND SEGUY OF CGT ADMITTED PUBLICLY IN RECORDED STATEMENTS THAT FEAR OF UNEMPLOYMENT IS "A DEMOBILIZING FACTOR" BUT IN AN EFFORT TO MAKE THE BEST OF THE SITUATION, MAIRE SPOKE OF "GATHERING CLOUDS OF DISCONTENT" WHILE SEGUY REFERRED TO SLOW "INCUBATION OF DISCONTENT WHICH MAY EXPLODE IF GOF DOES NOT CHANGE ITS POLICIES". THE TWO LEADERS DIFFERED SIGNIFICANTLY ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES; MAIRE HAILED THE RETURN OF DEMOCRACY IN GREECE AND PORTUGAL WHILE SEGUY FOCUSED EXCLUSIVELY ON VIETNAM.

6. FOR FIRST TIME IN RECENT YEARS MAY DAY ASSUMED FOLKLORIC CHARACTER THROUGH PARTICIPATION OF GROUPS FROM VARIOUS REGIONS OF FRANCE WITH LOCAL COSTUMES AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS. ALTHOUGH MAIN PURPOSE BEHIND THIS FOLKLORIC ELEMENT WAS ORGANIZERS' CONCERN TO LIVEN THE PARADE, POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS SHOULD NOT BE OVERLOOKED IN VIEW OF RENEWED SEARCH FOR AUTONOMY ON THE PART OF REGIONAL GROUPS.

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7. ANOTHER FIRST FOR 1 MAY 1975 WAS THE PARTICIPATION IN PARADE OF ABOUT 100 SOLDIERS BEARING MASKS TO AVOID IDENTIFICATION, CARRYING PLACARDS DEMANDING APPLICATION OF MINIMUM WAGE TO ARMY RECRUITS AND THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE IN UNIONS. THIS IS LATEST DEMONSTRATION OF THE MALAISE IN THE ARMED FORCES ANALYZED IN A-125.

8. THE ONLY INCIDENT OF THE DAY WAS AT THE END OF THE MORNING PARADE WHEN A FEW GAUCHISTS REFUSED TO DISPERSE AND INSTEAD THREW STONES AT NEARBY POLICE STATION. POLICE INTERVENTION FILLED GAMBETTA METRO STATION WITH TEAR GAS WHICH SUSPENDED METRO SERVICE FOR A FEW HOURS.

9. COMMENT. ALTHOUGH AN ANNUAL RITUAL MAY DAY PARADES DO FURNISH A FEW CLUES OR INDICATORS. IN ADDITION TO FOREGOING OBSERVATIONS IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT DELEGATIONS UNCLASSIFIED

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FROM THE OPPOSITION PARTIES (INCLUDING PSV) HEADED BY PROMINENT NATIONAL LEADERS PARTICIPATED IN THE CGT-CFDT PARADE THEREBY DRAMATIZING POLITICAL ALLIANCE OF RADICAL UNIONS WITH PARTIES OF THE LEFT.

10. CGT CAPACITY TO MOBILIZE THE RED BELT OF PARIS TO PUT ON A RESPECTABLE SHOW ON THE PARISIAN AVENUES WAS ESPECIALLY STRAINED THIS YEAR BECAUSE OF JACQUES DUCLOS' FUNERAL ON 29 APRIL. HAVING CHOSEN TO MAKE THE FUNERAL A NATIONAL EVENT, PCF HAD MADE AMPLE USE OF THE BUSES OF THE RED MUNICIPALITIES AROUND PARIS ON WHICH THE CGT RELIES HEAVILY FOR THE FREE TRANSPORTATION OF WORKERS TO PARADES AND DEMONSTRATIONS.
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